

REMARKS

Claims 1, 9, 13-16, 20-24, and 26 are pending in the present application. Claims 2-8, 10-12, 17-19, and 25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Applicant is seeking to expedite prosecution of the allowed and allowable claims in the present application and reserves the right to pursue these canceled claims in one or more continuing applications.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 3-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as failing to distinctly claim the invention. Since claims 3-8 have been canceled to expedite prosecution of the allowed and allowable claims, this rejection is currently moot.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(e) and 103(a)

Claims 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,984,508 to Hurley ("Hurley"). Claims 2, 9-11, and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,536,039 to Sanford ("Sanford") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,496,979 to Chen et al. ("Chen"). Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanford. To expedite prosecution of the allowed and allowable claims, claims 2, 10-11, 17-19, and 25 have been canceled without prejudice. Claim 9 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 12. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 2, 9-11, 17-19 and 25 is

moot at this time.

Allowed and Allowable Claims

The claims remaining in this application are claims 1, 9, 13-16, 20-24, and 26. In the current Office Action, claims 1, 13-16, 20-24, and 26 have been allowed. Claim 12 was objected to as being allowable if placed in independent form. Claim 9 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 12. Claim 12 has been canceled. Accordingly, claim 9 should now be allowed as well.

Information Disclosure Statement

On an even date with the present Amendment, Applicant is filing an Information Disclosure Statement citing the references cited in a first Office Action in a related case, U.S. Application Serial No. 09/669,479 filed on September 28, 2000.

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CONCLUSION

The Applicant respectfully submits that the present case is in condition for allowance and respectfully requests that the Examiner issue a notice of allowance.

The Office is hereby authorized to charge any fees determined to be necessary under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit any overpayment to Kenyon & Kenyon **Deposit Account No. 11-0600**.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4255 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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